

Good Morning, my name is Melanie Martin and I am very excited to be here this morning to talk with you about Mission at Elevation. 2019 began with a need for change in how we effectively engage Mission as an Elevation community. Today, after your help with a survey, some great conversations, a lot of brainstorming and some difficult decisions, I want to share what I hope we can collectively become inspired by as we continue to learn how to live out our faith in ways that intersect boldly with the people around us.

The Mission Team Vision Statement reads this way: **Develop deep relationships with a small group of local, national, and international partners and support initiatives that Elevation members are passionate about and personally involved in.**

The first way we hope to make this vision statement a reality is by deepening our relationships with four partners. Throughout the year, you will have an opportunity to hear more about and engage with these partners.

Journey is an Elevation team led by Courtney Janssen-Grieve. They support refugees in areas of Advocacy, Sponsorship, Settlement and Integration. Thanks to the R4R funds that we raise in the fall, Journey is able to support wonderful organizations like Welcome Home, MCRS, and Sanctuary Health Clinic. Our survey showed that refugees matter a great deal to the Elevation community and we remain committed to engage the work Journey is doing.

Future of Africa is an organization in Ghana led by TK Azalgo and Nikki Horne. Their mandate is to equip children in street situations to become leaders. They have recently opened a community center which has expanded their capacity to engage their kids on the street.

FaithTech exists to advance the gospel through utilizing the time and talents of people in tech. They run regular gatherings in Waterloo and 4 other cities in North America.

Bolivian Children Foundation supports the work of Ninos Con Valor in Bolivia. Over years of support, Elevation has been able to see first hand the incredible family homes that NCV has to provide children with value, love and hope for their future.

Our second branch of participating in Mission at Elevation is what we are going to term **Member Initiatives**. We are very hopeful that this can be an accessible way for anyone in our community to engage in mission opportunities they are passionate about. Did you know that there is a group of families and individuals who go every month to Supportive Housing Of Waterloo to bring a meal and share friendship with the people who live there? Did you know that Melissa Melick serves the students of Waterloo in a full time capacity with IVCF? Did you know that Jeremy Horne leads Adventure4Change an organization that provides a wealth of opportunity for engagement and leadership development in low income Waterloo communities? Last week Brennan Connolly spoke of his passion for racial justice, music, and working with the next generation in the

culmination of an event called the Gahu project taking place this weekend.

These and many more are the Member Initiatives that Elevation is so thrilled to engage with. Maybe you are a youth who participated in one of the March Break trips or the volunteer opportunities that Graham has led with the youth group. This is an opportunity for you to take things a step further with an idea you may have. Perhaps your family, like Rebecca and Jindi and their 3 boys who are currently teaching at a Discipleship Training School and leading that team to the Philippines, have been exploring tangible ways you can volunteer your time or give your resources. Maybe your small group wants to have a missional component to your time together.

Moving forward there will be an application process and twice a year a small group will review these member initiative requests to determine where Elevation is best able to offer their support. If you are passionate about one of our current initiatives or have an organization or event that you would like to see Elevation invest in, please consider applying. Our survey told us that Elevation cares deeply about a wide variety of opportunities and the best way for us to champion this array of needs is for you to take ownership of that process.

So, what can you do? (And please this is not the time to tune out because you think I am going to put you on a guilt trip, that is not my intent!) I am the first to acknowledge that we all have capacities and the last thing I want to do is make “busy work” for anyone. I do however believe wholeheartedly that we must do this together. We all have something to contribute, and when we each do what we can, our impact is multiplied 100x. So how can we take these ideas for Mission and keep them the heartbeat of what Elevation is about? Elevation was founded on Mission...a church for students to come to a life of faith, we joined with New Hope a church that was bursting with mission involvement, and we remain committed to pooling our resources, finances, time and talent to live out our faith in the world beyond these church walls.

I need some help, friends. I quite literally cannot effectively do this on my own. There will be 2 teams. One will be our Partner support team: if you are passionate about one of our 4 partners and are able to be their liaison please join me. If you are interested in being part of the team that reads through and makes decisions about our Member Initiatives, please join me. Take things to the next level. If you participate in R4R, as a rider or giving financially, go the next step and take time to contact Courtney about what happens to those funds during the year. If you buy a stocking at Christmas for the kids at NCV, contact Bolivian Children Foundation and ask them about the story of the child on your stocking and commit to praying for them throughout the year. Ask questions. I am happy to answer as best I can, any of the questions you have about Mission at Elevation, our Partners, our Member Initiatives and how you can be involved. Please take time to read the insert and see if there is something there for you.

Thank you for your time, to end this part of our service we have a video from the director of NCV, Tyson, who will be here next Sunday during discussion time.